

The Heavens 171

Chapter 171: Forgotten

“Brat, you did good this time!” Ji Wenlong’s gaze was full of appreciation when he looked at Shang Xia.

Shang Xia nodded humbly after receiving his praise from Ji Wenlong. “If not for Deputy Patriarch Ji’s assistance earlier, I would have lost my life.”

Ji Wenlong nodded and turned to the Coral Command that Shang Bo had already refined. “Brother Shang, what’s the plan?”

“We’re going on a killing spree... I mean, we’re gonna kill them with a borrowed blade...” Shang Bo didn’t hesitate to speak.

Ji Wenlong wasn’t surprised by his plan either. Instead, he nodded approvingly, “That’s exactly what I thought. What do you think the four spiritual lands look like now?”

“I entered the Dual Season Land and it’s a complete mess now...” Shang Bo replied.

“How so?” Ji Wenlong raised an eyebrow in surprise.

“I found Yan Su’er and she worked solely on destroying the place...”

Ji Wenlong sniggered under his breath, “Yeah... I met Lang Xiaoyun earlier. If not for the sudden appearance of the rank four undead corpses and Zhu Tong, he would have been going on a rampage to destroy anything he could find. Looks like the Four Spiritual Peak has their own plan for the Coral Forest...”

Shang Bo chuckled in response, “Of course they do. Even if they manage to occupy the Coral Forest, they won’t be able to do a thing with it. However, things will be different if we manage to obtain it. They would rather destroy it than allow us to benefit.”

“What about the other regions?” Ji Wenlong asked again.

Shang Xia replied before Shang Bo could say anything. “Our side controls the core region of the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World. However, Ran Biluo is going crazy inside it and she should be trashing the place as we speak. As for the Unstable Region, the core region seems pretty intact. Shang Lubing and a Martial Extermination Realm expert of the Rose Party started fighting in there. As for the Willow Forest...”

“... We managed to control the core region of the Willow Forest and Liu Zhiyuan entered the Martial Extermination Realm. Oh, right, where’s Jitang? Why isn’t he here?”

Shang Bo was slightly taken aback. When Shang Xia brought him over earlier, he only managed to gain a rough understanding of the situation. Due to the existence of the rank five undead corpse, he decided to drag Ji Wenlong over before doing anything else. As such, he forgot about Liu Jitang completely.

Now that Ji Wenlong brought him up, Shang Bo realized that something wasn't right. Since things had progressed up to that point, it didn't make sense for Liu Jitang to remain hidden.

Shang Bo turned to look at Shang Xia after thinking about it.

After all, the little kid was the first person to arrive.

When Ji Wenlong saw Shang Bo's gaze, he seemed to have reached a conclusion too. He turned to look at Shang Xia with a strange gaze in his eyes.

Even though Shang Xia knew that he wasn't in any danger, his heart thumped wildly after attracting the attention of two Martial Extermination Realm monsters. He explained quickly, "Deputy Patriarch Liu and another expert of the Rose Party were trying to stop Zhu Tong from breaking out from behind those bronze gates... Now that Zhu Tong has emerged..."

Shang Xia didn't dare to continue. However, the two old men pretty much guessed what happened. Their expressions sank instantly.

Ji Wenlong swept his gaze across the bronze gate and he saw the imprints on the surface and his eyelids twitched slightly. His voice became several notches lower and he growled, "Did you see it yourself? Why isn't his corpse here?"

Shang Bo frowned too, but he didn't say anything.

Shang Xia shook his head and sighed, "When I got here, I didn't see either body. They might have been eaten by Zhu Tong when he escaped or something."

There were many holes in Shang Xia's words but Ji Wenlong chose not to dive deeper into his questioning.

"The person with Brother Liu should be Murong Tianlan..." Ji Wenlong explained.

Shang Bo nodded. It was clear he agreed with Ji Wenlong. "If that's the case, we lost Liu Jitang and the Rose Party sacrificed Murong Tianlan... That old freak isn't one whit weaker than you..."

The two Martial Extermination Realm experts fell silent for a moment.

In the past twenty years, the two of them had experienced a lot of things. They were no strangers to death, but Liu Jitang's demise definitely affected them. After all, the three had been through many battles together and formed a good sense of comradery.

Now that Liu Jitang had died, one of the five strongest experts of the Tongyou Institution had left the world forever. It was a feeling they would need time to get used to.

All of a sudden, Shang Bo's body trembled slightly and the Coral Command emitted dense rays of light.

"You started to refine the Coral Command?" Ji Wenlong asked.

Nodding slowly, Shang Bo drew over some heaven and earth qi to create another screen. "It might get a little dangerous over at Shang Lubing's side. I'm preparing to drag him over here forcefully. You can get ready to get rid of his opponents!"

"Now that we managed to get our hands on the Coral Command, we can take the initiative in dealing with the other parties. Now, we need to use Zhu Tong to get rid of

those from the Four Spiritual Peak and the Rose Party. At the same time, we need to reduce the amount of damage dealt to the Coral Forest.” Ji Wenlong agreed.

Shang Bo added, “No matter what, we need to be careful. We don’t know what the rank five undead corpse is capable of...”

When the two of them started to come up with their plan, Shang Xia knew that he was no longer needed and he chose to stroll about aimlessly in the area.

The entire area had clearly been swept clean by Liu Jitang, Murong Tianlan, and Zhu Ying. Shang Xia failed to locate anything after combing through the place twice, and his gaze landed on the stone chamber inside those bronze gates.

Arriving several feet away from the gate, Shang Xia felt a wave of cold air blasting against him and he shivered controllably.

He circulated his inner qi to dispel the frost encroaching on his bones. When he was done, he stepped closer towards the bronze gate. Reaching out to touch them, he was shocked to discover that the massive gate contained quite a huge amount of Furnace Core Copper.

Furnace Core Copper was a rank four material, and it was used to create high-grade weapons!

It was no wonder the bronze gate could hold the rank five undead corpse back!

From the looks of it, Furnace Core Copper made up the bulk of the material used to create the doors. If Shang Xia was able to extract them, god knew how many high-grade weapons he would be able to make...

It was even possible for the Shang Clan to craft a high-grade spear for Shang Bo! After all, Shang Bo was using a lance at the moment. The Nine Firefly Lance was a high-grade weapon, but it wasn’t the most suited for Shang Bo’s martial arts! What made it worse was that the Nine Firefly Lance belonged to the institution anyway!

If Shang Xia managed to extract the Furnace Core Copper and create a high-grade spear, Shang Bo’s cultivation and strength would take a huge leap forward!

As a multitude of thoughts ran through Shang Xia’s mind, he stepped into the stone chamber behind those doors.

The square chamber was thirty feet in length, and twenty feet tall. In the center of the room was a giant stone coffin that had its lid popped open.

Shang Xia could imagine what happened when Liu Jitang and Murong Tianlan arrived initially. They opened the coffin in a state of excitement when they arrived, hoping to get their hands on some supreme treasure owned by the Zhu Family. By doing so, they caused Zhu Tong to regain consciousness.

Realizing that they messed up, they ran out of the chamber before using everything they had to stop the rank five undead corpse from charging its way out.

They might have thought that they would be able to hold out until other experts came, and they chose to work together.

Who would have thought that their greed would come back to bite them in the ass? They ran in too deep, too quickly. No one was able to catch up to them after they entered the Zhu Family Manor!

Recalling how the rank four advancement formula he saw previously was engraved onto the walls of the stone chamber, Shang Xia looked around him hastily. However, he failed to see a thing.

Twenty years had passed since the destruction of the Zhu Family, and Zhu Tong was currently an undead corpse! He might be at the fifth rank, but who knew if he managed to make his breakthrough when he was still alive? The advancement formula Shang Xia saw previously might not be fully safe, but regardless, it allowed Zhu Tong to reach the next level!

There had to be an advancement formula created by the Zhu Family! However, it was almost certain that it was on the body of the undead corpse.

That was the Martial Dipper Realm they were talking about! Unless Kou Chongxue personally arrived in the battlefield between two worlds, no one else would dare to try retrieving the rank five advancement formula from Zhu Tong's body!

Of course, there was a tiny chance the advancement formula would be inscribed on the walls where Zhu Tong's body was held.

Question marks started appearing in Shang Xia's mind. He wondered if Zhu Tong already knew that he would die when he tried advancing to the Martial Dipper Realm, and he prepared the stone coffin for himself.

Could he have expected himself to transform into an undead corpse?!

One final guess flashed through Shang Xia's mind suddenly. Was the coffin a part of the requirements to step into the Martial Dipper Realm?!

Approaching the stone coffin slowly, Shang Xia pressed down on its surface. A dense wave of heaven and earth qi containing some sort of antiquity swallowed him.

Shang Xia leaped backward hastily, and he gasped desperately for air while suspiciously staring at the coffin.

At that moment, a soft yellow glow enveloped the entire coffin.

The yellow light started to flicker, and rows of words started to appear on the surface of the coffin. Every single word seemed to contain boundless power.

"Could this be... Could this be an advancement formula for the fifth rank?!"

Shang Xia's heartbeat accelerated in an instant. Gathering all his attention, he tried memorizing the formula, only to realize that he forgot it the next moment.

Every time he read through the words on the surface of the coffin, he would forget what he read the very next instant!

Chapter 172: Earth Source Stone, Spatial Pouch

After looking at the words on the coffin for some time, Shang Xia felt his head throbbing in pain. His chest tightened, and a feeling of nausea washed over him.

That wasn't all. He also felt that his inner qi was draining at a rapid pace.

Realizing that the stone coffin held some weird shit, he chose to leave the stone chamber as quickly as he could.

Not too long after he emerged, the ground under his feet started to shake violently.

Turning to stare at the direction where the trembling came from, Shang Xia saw Ji Wenlong's figure disappearing through a spatial door.

Shang Bo sat cross-legged on the ground as his extermination origin surrounded the Coral Command hovering before him.

Not too far away, another person could be seen meditating. That person wasn't foreign to Shang Xia. After all, he had seen Shang Lubing multiple times already.

The moment Shang Xia emerged from the bronze gate, Shang Bo and Shang Lubing opened their eyes simultaneously.

"Did you find anything inside?" Shang Bo teased. There were traces of a smile on Shang Lubing's face too.

After cultivators entered the Martial Intent Realm, they would be able to use their divine sense to observe their surroundings. There wasn't a need to mention experts at the level of Shang Bo and the rest. They were in the Martial Extermination Realm and their divine sense was much stronger than Martial Intent Realm cultivators.

The moment either of them arrived, they swept their divine sense through the entire region. That included the stone chamber behind those bronze gates.

They concluded that there was nothing in there, but they didn't stop Shang Xia from snooping around.

That was the reason they didn't bother looking around after they arrived. They were able to fully focus on the rank five undead corpse running amok in the Zhu Family Manor.

After hearing what he said, Shang Xia realized that the two of them couldn't see what was on the coffin! A pout formed on his lips as he knew that they were laughing at him for underestimating their abilities. However, a snort quickly escaped his lips. "Humph! What do you old men know?! The coffin inside the stone chamber is pretty impressive! There might be a rank five advancement formula within!"

Shang Bo and Shang Lubing nearly burst out laughing.

According to the two of them, Shang Xia was merely trying to mess with them. With their abilities, they were more than capable of inspecting the stone coffin with their divine sense!

If there really was a rank five advancement formula on the coffin, they would have discovered it and leaped into action a long time ago!

Ji Wenlong wouldn't head out immediately like he just did.

Shang Xia frowned when he saw their reactions. "Do you not believe me?"

"It's true that the stone coffin is a little special. It's made up entirely of an Earth Source Rock, and Zhu Tong had been cultivating inside it. It is definitely a key to

advancing to the Martial Dipper Realm, but that's about it. It was too bad the collision between the two worlds was too terrifying. It killed him despite his impressive cultivation, turning him into an undead corpse." Shang Bo sighed.

"What is an Earth Source Rock?" Shang Xia asked suddenly. "Is it some high leveled material used to craft high-grade weapons?"

Shang Lubing couldn't control his laughter any longer. He chortled in amusement, "High-grade weapons? Earth Source Rock is used to make divine weapons!"

"What?! It's a rank five material?!" Shang Xia exclaimed in shock as he turned to head back into the stone chamber.

How large did the Earth Source Rock have to be if Zhu Tong managed to craft the entire thing into a stone coffin?

If he managed to chip off a small piece...

However, Shang Lubing's voice rang in his ears the moment he turned. "Too bad the energy in the ore had been sapped dry by Zhu Tong when he advanced. It's a useless pile of rock now..."

Shang Xia stopped dead in his tracks and he turned to look at Shang Lubing with an ugly expression stuck on his face. "Boss Shang... You're messing with me..."

Shang Lubing roared with laughter. "Brat, you gained a huge merit this time! Why would I mess with you? Haha, I'm just happy that our Tongyou Institution would be able to gain a footing in the Coral Forest! The cultivation of our disciples will definitely take a huge step forward. In the future, our Tongyou Institution will transform into a mysterious world of its own!"

"Wait... What do you mean by that? How will we be able to transform into a mysterious world?" Shang Xia revealed a shocked expression.

Explaining patiently, Shang Lubing started from the very top. "Our Tongyou Institution of today can be considered a spiritual land at the peak of its power. I am sure all of you have noticed, but the space contained within our institution is a lot larger than the space we actually occupy in the You Continent."

Shang Xia nodded. It was true that he felt that way before.

"It's not easy for one to transform from a spiritual land to a mysterious world. In the past, only the Zhu Family had the qualifications to turn their entire territory into a mysterious world. Once we do the same, our institution will gain an even stronger foundation..." Shang Lubing paused for a second before looking at Shang Bo subconsciously. "... We'll also become a lot stronger than before!"

Shang Xia agreed with what Shang Lubing said yet again. The four special regions in the Coral Forest were part of the Zhu Family's territory, and all of them could be regarded as a spiritual land themselves. Moreover, all of them corresponded to a part of the Zhu Family's inheritance.

The core regions of each region would be able to nurture an extermination origin from time to time, solving the greatest issue faced by Martial Intent Realm experts when they wished to break through.

As for the last sentence mentioned by Shang Lubing, he was clearly directing it towards Shang Bo! Right at that moment, several rays of light emerged from the Coral Command. This time, Shang Xia could tell that his grandfather's extermination origin had completely stained the Coral Command.

"This is the third cycle... He should have gained control over the entire mysterious world owned by the Zhu Family..." Shang Lubing muttered. He rose to his feet, ignoring all the slight injuries that had yet to recover and stared at Shang Bo.

Grunting once, Shang Bo confirmed his suspicions. "Take a step back. Liu Jitang and Murong Tianlan's corpse might still be around!"

After he spoke, he pointed at the Coral Command. The ting mountain that had been hovering in the air flew into his hands. The instant it did, several layers of space peeled away and two withered corpses fell to the ground.

Shang Xia recognized the two of them instantly as he had seen them before on the screen in the stone chamber.

However, his eyes landed on a small pouch hanging from each of their waists.

Could it be? Could it actually be a spatial pouch?!

Chapter 173: Zhu Family Talisman Scripture

Seeing the two corpses that were falling from the skies, Shang Xia gasped in fright.

He had his guesses on what happened to their corpses after he arrived. They could either be hidden somewhere by Zhu Ying, or they would have been turned to dust by the rank five undead corpse. Of course, Shang Xia couldn't shake the disgusting idea that their corpses had been eaten by the rank five undead corpse.

From what he knew, the two of them were the ones who gained the most during their trip to the Coral Forest.

Zhu Ying might seem extremely familiar with the place, but with his meager cultivation, he could only receive scraps Liu Jitang didn't want. Who would have thought that the two of them would be sent into some random pocket of space by Zhu Tong when he escaped?

Looking at the pouches on their bodies, Shang Xia's heated gaze was quickly quelled by his rational thinking. Since things had progressed to that point, their treasures would no longer belong to him.

It wasn't because of the two Martial Extermination Realm experts present, and neither was it because he wasn't the first to locate their corpses. Even if he managed to find them before Shang Bo and the others arrived, he wouldn't be able to open their spatial pouches regardless!

A spatial pouch was different from an Embroidered Cloud Case. As long as one had enough inner qi, one would be able to open an Embroidered Cloud Case regardless of its level.

However, a spatial pouch was on a whole new level. There were many layers of restrictions protecting it from outside forces, and if one failed to use a proper method to open it, even Ji Wenlong and the others wouldn't be able to force it open in a short amount of time.

Shang Bo reached out casually and dragged the two spatial pouches to himself.

Glancing at Shang Lubing, Shang Bo sighed, "Looks like we'll have to hand this over to the patriarch after we return. All of us will have to work together to open this..."

"Alright!" Shang Lubing replied happily.

However, Shang Xia had to interrupt him at that moment. "Grandpa, did Zhu Tong send them into that pocket of space intentionally? Is a rank five undead corpse actually smart enough to do it? Does that also mean that it awakened its memories before he died?"

Shang Lubing stared at Shang Bo with a serious expression too, waiting for an answer.

"It's likely... However, even if it did remember what happened before, it's no longer the Zhu Tong of before." Shang Bo muttered.

Shang Xia heaved a sigh of relief and he wanted to continue asking. Before he could say anything, Shang Bo waved his hand and summoned a screen to look at the situation in the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World.

Ripples formed on the screen and Shang Bo drew a line in the space before him with the Vermillion Plaque. Ji Wenlong's arm reached out from the broken space.

"Wha..." The moment the newcomer appeared, a look of shock could be seen on her face. "Is this the forbidden ground in the Zhu Family Manor used to control the four spiritual lands? Chief Shang, is that the Coral Command?"

The person who appeared was surprisingly Chu Jia who specialized in formations. Another figure appeared behind her, and his face turned as pale as a sheet when he saw Murong Tianlan's corpse lying not too far away.

He was Bai Luming who had been convinced by Chu Jia to join their side, but seeing the corpse of his former leader was pretty disheartening.

Shang Bo chuckled in response, "Little lass, you're pretty smart. I'm afraid that your instinct in the way of formations is better than Old Ma..."

Shang Bo didn't take long to continue. "Initially, we should have handed this place over to your or Old Ma... However, the situation was too dire and I had no choice but to refine the Coral Command myself."

It didn't take a genius to realize that the higher-ups of the Tongyou Institution had high hopes for Chu Jia after hearing what he said.

A giggle escaped Chu Jia's lips in response. "Chief Shang, there's no need for explanations. Even though controlling the grand formation here requires some insights in the way of formations, strength is most important. Without a suitable cultivation base, one will be unable to control the grand formation."

After she replied Shang Bo, she turned to greet Shang Lubing. Her gaze quickly traveled to Shang Xia and she waved happily before bringing Bai Luming to go inspect the formation lining the ground.

Even though Shang Bo had already refined the Coral Command once, he only gained the most primitive way to control the Coral Forest. He would have to repeat the process several times before he could control the Coral Forest better.

The formation drawn on the ground was extensive and there were many intricacies that could only be discovered by powerful formation masters.

Shang Lubing spoke up suddenly, "Should I head over to the core region of the Willow Forest to get Ma Mingzheng?"

Since the grand formation lost effectiveness a long time ago, Martial Extermination Realm experts could fly and they were able to somewhat manipulate space in the Coral Forest.

Due to the battle with the rank five undead corpse, Ji Wenlong received quite a few injuries. He took a trip over to the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World and used up quite a bit of inner qi.

Even though Shang Lubing's cultivation wasn't as high as Ji Wenlong, he was in a much better condition than the deputy patriarch. He felt that he should take Ji Wenlong's place in dealing with some matters.

However, his suggestion was quickly rejected by both Shang Bo and Ji Wenlong.

Looking at Shang Lubing's shocked expression, Shang Bo explained, "Brother Shang, please don't misunderstand. The reason we can travel freely through the Coral Forest is because Chief Ji and I both have Vermillion Plaques. Otherwise, you won't be able to arrive at your desired destination and might drop yourself in some hot mess."

"Since that's the case, Chief Ji can lend me his Vermillion Plaque for the time being. Are you afraid that I'll plot against our Tongyou Institution?" Shang Lubing frowned and looked at Ji Wenlong. A trace of hurt could be seen on his face.

Shang Lubing chuckled slightly to mask his feelings, but everyone realized that his voice was getting a little hoarse.

"Of course not. Brother Shang, even if you get the Vermillion Plaque, you won't be able to use it effectively. This isn't just a matter of cultivation. Chief Ji and I cultivated techniques similar to those in the Zhu Family Inheritance. The Vermillion Plaque is much more useful to us. Do you understand? If we wish to start sending others through the Coral Forest, we will have to reactivate the grand formation and go from there." Shang Bo continued his explanation.

"So that's the case..." Shang Lubing nodded in realization.

Shang Bo smiled before turned to ask Ji Wenlong, "Chief Ji, did you manage to locate Ran Biluo in the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World?"

"Nope... I was planning to use the formation to catch her off guard. Even if she doesn't die, she'll be seriously injured. However, she seemed to have smelled that danger was coming and left before I could arrive." Ji Wenlong sighed.

“Yeah, she was probably too scared to remain. The kid told me that he went around to spread the news of the rank five undead corpse’s appearance around the Coral Forest. She might have heard it and ran.” Shang Bo nodded.

Shang Xia looked at the three Martial Extermination Realm experts and he realized that he was of no use there and he decided to return to the stone chamber behind those bronze gates. He wanted to look at the spoils of war after killing Zhu Ying.

As he made his way over, Shang Xia heard Ji Wenlong’s voice coming from behind. “Luckily for us, Liu Zhiyuan managed to refine an extermination origin in the Willow Forest and enter the Martial Extermination Realm. Jitang’s legacy wouldn’t be lost after his death... Otherwise, only three great clans would be left...”

Chu Jia’s laughter filled the air after she heard what he said. “Oh? Did Liu Zhiyuan also enter the Martial Extermination Realm? Senior Shang Ke also managed to refine an extermination origin to enter the Martial Extermination Realm...”

Shang Xia chuckled silently as he knew that chaos was about to break out outside with the revelation of Shang Ke’s breakthrough. However, he quickly returned to his task and focused on the items he gained from Zhu Ying.

Like what Mu Qingyu said earlier, there was practically no herb lower than the second rank in Zhu Ying’s Embroidered Cloud Case.

Shang Xia scanned through every inch of it, but he discovered that the amount of things inside wasn’t as much as he had thought.

When Zhu Ying cleared this inventory of all the herbs below the second rank in the chamber, he was probably making room for new treasures he was about to find. Too bad his plans were messed up by Shang Xia’s sudden appearance.

He had to break through to the Martial Intent Realm as quickly as possible, wasting yet another batch of resources. As such, the amount left on him was somewhat pitiful.

Whatever the case, they were worth a tidy sum to Shang Xia.

The items that caught Shang Xia’s eye were three rank three talismans. They were placed in special cases, but they seemed to be losing their effect with the passage of time. There were also several other empty cases and Shang Xia knew that those were the talismans Zhu Ying tossed out earlier when they fought.

Even though those talismans were rare, Shang Xia didn’t understand why they had to be kept in their individual cases. However, he quickly realized the problem.

“All these talismans used to contain divine sense... However, they slowly dissipated after so many years. They became ordinary rank three talismans, and there were even some that were less effective than rank three talismans! It was no wonder they were easily destroyed...”

A trace of fear lingered in Shang Xia’s heart after he realized the problem. If those talismans were at their full power, he would have died several times over!

Tossing out the empty cases, Shang Xia kept the remaining talismans even though they might not be of great use to him.

Looking at another book contained in Zhu Ying's Embroidered Cloud Case, Shang Xia immediately recognized the words, 'Zhu Family Talisman Scripture'. There were 23 types of rank one talisman recorded within, 14 types of rank two talismans, and 6 types of rank three talismans. There were even 3 rank four talismans recorded!

Detailed instructions to create each talisman was contained in the scripture, along with their uses.

It went without saying that the Zhu Family Talisman Scripture was an inheritance treasure that contained the life work of countless talisman masters of the Zhu Family! The amount of knowledge contained within was too valuable! No matter what treasure Shang Xia could find in the institution or his Shang Clan, there was no way of comparing it to the Zhu Family Talisman Scripture!

Chapter 174: Quandary Manual, Hidden Needle Manual

As a matter of fact, any sort of inheritance in the dao of talismans was all over the place. In different parts of the world, the same talisman could have different names.

Talismans made by different masters were also different. Ordinary cultivators only cared about the effects, and they didn't know too much about the details. That only served to disrupt the many inheritances out there.

The situation was pretty much the same as cultivators trying to raise their level. Cultivators at the Martial Realm would only bother getting their hands on an advancement formula to break through to the Martial Extremity Realm. They wouldn't care about the compatibility they had with the medicine! They didn't know how important a sense of compatibility was! If the medicine they used wasn't effective and they forced themselves to break through, they would be much weaker than those of the same level! They would also find it extremely difficult to advance in the future.

Since obtaining an advancement formula itself was an amazing feat of its own, no one would care about the intricacies!

Back to the issue with the talisman inheritance from the Zhu Family. It was completely different from the others out there!

Out of the 23 rank one talismans, 18 of them were created with the same principle as 10 of the rank two ones. One could say that they were the basis of many rank two talismans contained in the inheritance.

As long as one mastered how to create those 18 rank one talismans, they would be able to smoothly break through to a rank two talisman master as their cultivation and comprehension progressed.

They would be able to save a lot of time and resources compared to others without the inheritance!

After becoming a rank two talisman master, 12 of the 14 talismans contained within formed the basis of some rank three talismans.

The same theory applied. For rank three talismans.

Looking at the Zhu Family Talisman Scripture, Shang Xia's path to becoming a rank four talisman master became clear! He no longer needed to collect a ton of formulas to increase his

comprehension in a certain aspect. As long as he followed the Zhu Family Talisman Scripture, it was a matter of time before he became a rank four talisman master!

Of course... It wouldn't be as easy as he thought. When Shang Xia flipped through the Zhu Family Talisman Scripture, he discovered that the records for rank four talismans were gone!

It wasn't because someone destroyed them on purpose. Instead, it was as though they weren't recorded in the Zhu Family Talisman Scripture at all! Instead, the inheritance for the 3 rank four talismans was located in the Coral Forest.

Even direct disciples of the Zhu Family would have to obtain the approval of the higher-ups of the Zhu Family if they wanted to obtain the inheritance for the fourth rank!

Shang Xia suddenly thought about the several stone tablets that were wiped away in the courtyard previously.

Could those contain the instructions to create rank four talismans?!

Ache filled Shang Xia's heart as he cursed Zhu Ying silently. From what Shang Xia experienced so far, Zhu Ying was only someone who would mess things up.

Thinking deeper into it, Shang Xia sighed eventually. He realized that Zhu Ying wouldn't have cared about those inscriptions as he didn't know that Shang Xia was a talisman master. Since Zhu Ying wasn't a talisman master either, he probably had no idea what was written on those stone tablets. The only thing Zhu Ying cared about destroying was the formula for the Hundred Days Longevity Intoxication.

Since it wasn't Zhu Ying, Shang Xia could only guess that the destruction of the stone tablets was done by the members of the Zhu Family. Liu Jitang and Murong Tianlan were suspects too!

In fact, Shang Xia felt that the two of them were more likely to be the culprits!

If he wasn't wrong, they erased the words on the tablet after copying them somewhere! The copies should be in their spatial pouch!

Slapping his forehead in a fit of anger, Shang Xia realized that getting his hands on those wouldn't be as easy as he thought. After all, Shang Bo planned to hand the spatial pouches over to Kou Chongxue in order to open them without destroying their contents.

The inheritance was sure to fall in the hands of the institution, and if he wanted to learn it, he would have to pay some sort of price.

That wasn't the worst part. The moment those rank four talisman formulas were revealed, he wouldn't be able to keep the entire scripture for himself!

Whatever the case, the pain was temporary, it wouldn't affect Shang Xia's state of mind.

The most important thing he had to do was to keep the Zhu Family Talisman Scripture safe. After sucking it back into his Embroidered Cloud Case, Shang Xia continued to look through his spoils. He quickly discovered several rare herbs, and it was more than enough for him to create another portion of Tempering Meridian Powder.

He also managed to find several rank three herbs and one of them was the Resplendent Grass he had been hearing about for some time now! He didn't know if he could use it when creating the medicine he needed to advance, but no one would complain about having more treasures.

A thought flashed through Shang Xia's mind all of a sudden. His Yin Yang Sword Formation might have a lot of space to improve, but his current cultivation was already at the grand completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm! He could easily try to advance by creating any random advancement medicine he knew.

Looking through the rest of the herbs, Shang Xia didn't recognize a few of them. He decided to just toss them into his Embroidered Cloud Case and deal with them when he got back.

Next, a short sword appeared in his hand. It was a low-grade weapon, and it was called Jade Creek. The sword was slightly less than two feet long, and it was shorter than Shang Xia's Delicate River Jade Sword.

Even so, he was still extremely pleased with his discovery.

The two swords might not be of the same length, but Jade Creek was at least a graded weapon! With it in hand, Shang Xia wouldn't have to worry about wasting even more swords when he used those sword arts that required him to dual wield.

Other than the sword, he eventually discovered two sword manuals contained in Zhu Ying's belongings.

It didn't take long for him to immerse himself in the manuals. One of them was called the Quandary Manual, and the other was called the Hidden Needle Manual. Both of them were part of the Zhu Family's inheritance.

Chapter 175: Training

The ambition of the Martial Extermination Realm experts of the Tongyou Institution was finally clear for all to see!

After all, they managed to get their hands on the Coral Command and obtained the absolute initiative in the Coral Forest!

Shang Bo and the others wouldn't be satisfied with just obtaining the Zhu Family Inheritance now that things had progressed to this stage. The Rose Party and Four Spiritual Peak had been plotting against them for the longest time and now, it was time for revenge. They had to take the chance to cause great damage to their enemies!

Normally, Shang Bo and Ji Wenlong wouldn't expect much as their strength was pretty similar. If the Rose Party chose to work with the members of the Four Spiritual Peak, there was nothing much the Tongyou Institution could do against them. Things were different now. There was a rank five undead corpse running around and a sinister idea entered their minds. They weren't able to kill their enemies before, but with the help of the undead corpse, things would be much easier.

With the help of the Coral Command, Shang Bo could basically locate the experts of the Rose Party and Four Spiritual Peak. Working with Ji Wenlong, they would open a spatial door near the other party's location and start their massacre.

Since Shang Ke and Liu Zhuyuan had broken through to the Martial Extermination Realm, Shang Bo and Ji Wenlong brought them over.

However, the two of them didn't stay for long as they soon left with Shang Lubing.

Since all the Martial Extermination Realm experts of the Tongyou Institution had basically met, - Other than the one who died earlier - they knew what everyone had to do.

Using the grand formation to assist them, Shang Bo controlled the Coral Command as the others combined their strength to activate the spatial gates to the various regions in the Coral Forest. They started to eliminate the straggling experts of the other two factions.

Ever since Shang Xia brought Shang Bo over, he didn't have much left to do.

The Martial Extermination Realm experts entered and left as they wished, but none of that had anything to do with Shang Xia! He was immersed in his cultivation, and no one could be bothered with him.

Shang Xia poured all his attention onto the new sword manuals he obtained.

Even though the sword manuals were only a small part of the Zhu Family's inheritance, they were extremely formidable! Training in any one of them would allow a cultivator of the Martial Extremity Realm to eventually comprehend a martial intent!

The Quandary Manual focused on life and death qi, and it was what Zhu Ying was starting to train in.

When Shang Xia delved deeper into the Quandary Manual, he realized how impressive it was. The issue of life and death was extremely complex. It wasn't something someone could learn in a short period of time, much less a Martial Extremity Realm cultivator!

After examining the manual, Shang Xia finally understood that the core of the manual was much more elementary than he had thought. Instead of the dao of life and death, the manual allowed one to train in such a way that the user would cause their opponent to border on the edge of life and death.

If that was really true, Shang Xia felt that the Quandary Manual in his hands was an extremely insidious sword art.

Even so, he decided to try training in it.

Shang Xia's intention was to improve on his Yin Yang Sword Formation, and the user of the sword art would determine what type of destruction it would bring. Even though the Quandary Manual was extremely insidious, the effects depended on the user.

After training in so many different types of sword arts, Shang Xia was quickly able to grasp the essence of the Quandary Manual.

His Yin Yang Essence Qi was able to transform at will, and the moment he started training, his inner qi quickly transformed.

The deeper he went into the manual, the more he understood. The Quandary Manual seemed to contain more intricacies than what he could see...

As for the Hidden Needle Manual, it contained the dao of offense and defense.

At the very peak of the Hidden Needle Manual, one would be able to attack and defend at the same time. However, the start of the manual focused on defense. Offense only came after, and Shang Xia would have to focus more energy on learning how to optimize his defense.

Shang Xia remained in the stone chamber as he immersed himself in those two sword manuals. No one knew how long had passed, but he quickly managed to reach the small completion stage in both manuals.

If he wanted to fuse them into his Yin Yang Sword Formation, it would take a little more time.

As Shang Xia immersed himself in his cultivation, he would only be distracted from time to time when Shang Bo opened up spatial gates for cultivators of the institution to move around.

Clearly, things weren't going as smoothly as they had thought. Even though the Tongyou Institution held an absolute advantage and could sneak attack anyone they wished, a Martial Extermination Realm expert wouldn't die so easily!

Even though they were separated by several regions in the Coral Forest, the experts of each faction were able to communicate with each other. Their mode of communication might not be as effective as Shang Bo's Coral Command, but it was enough to tell each other that the Tongyou Institution was messing with them.

There was no more hiding the fact that the Tongyou Institution managed to obtain the Coral Command and control the entire territory. The news started to spread among the experts of the other factions, and the fact that a rank five undead corpse was running around also quickly arrived in the ears of other cultivators.

When Ji Wenlong made his first sneak attack, he managed to injure Ran Biluo.

However, the damn woman was too alert. When she destroyed the space Shang Xia was using to spy on her earlier, she had already raised her guard.

The moment Ji Wenlong appeared, she started to make her escape. The only reason she was injured was because she was far too weak compared to Ji Wenlong. If she was truly caught off guard, she would have died several times over.

Ji Wenlong could only bring Shang Ke away after failing to assassinate Ran Biluo.

As Shang Bo's control over the Coral Command improved, he enlisted the help of Chu Jia and Bai Luming to open another gate to the Unstable Region.

This time, Ji Wenlong, Shang Ke, and Shang Lubing moved in unison. They attacked the core region of the Unstable Region together, killing Murong Gaofeng who had just advanced.

It was too bad the destruction to the Unstable Region during that battle was massive. It would be extremely difficult to restore it to its original state.

Soon after, the three of them moved to the core region of the Willow Forest.

That was where the rank five undead corpse was running around unchecked. After Ji Wenlong left, Lang Xiaoyun and Dongfang Daying had a massive battle with the rank five undead corpse. They destroyed half the manor before changing the place of battle to the Willow Forest.

Liu Zhiyuan who was the only Martial Extermination Realm expert stationed there was desperate for help when Ji Wenlong and the others arrived. The three of them formed a protection squad as they whisked him away.

Chapter 176: Liu Zhiyuan

Lang Xiaoyun and Dongfang Daying thought of luring the rank five undead corpse to the core region of the Willow Forest to cause maximum destruction there, and to drag Shang Bo and Ji Wenlong into the battle.

It was too bad Shang Bo and the rest were in the separate space that contained the bronze gate. No matter how hard Lang Xiaoyun and Dongfang Daying tried, they were unable to locate anyone else.

Even if they did manage to detect Shang Bo and Ji Wenlong's presence, they wouldn't be able to enter the separate space anyway.

Ever since Shang Bo obtained the Coral Command, his control over the Coral Forest grew stronger the more he refined it. With Chu Jia and Bai Luming's assistance, they were able to block off anyone they didn't wish to enter.

As Lang Xiaoyun and Dongfang Daying were chased around by the rank five undead corpse, they were gradually losing their strength. They were lucky that Ji Wenlong slayed a rank four undead corpse and sliced off another rank four undead corpse's arm before leaving. Otherwise, the two of them would have died a long time ago.

Since they were unable to locate Ji Wenlong or Shang Bo, the two of them could only lead the corpses away from the manor. They ran through the Willow Forest in an attempt to escape, but they were also trying to locate the core region while doing so.

They were unable to drag Ji Wenlong out for him to suffer with them, and they thought of attacking the members of the Tongyou Institution hiding in the core region of the Willow Forest. No matter how despicable Ji Wenlong was to leave them to fight the rank five undead corpse, he would have to appear once the members of the institution were under threat.

Even though Shang Bo wasn't able to control the Coral Forest however he wished, he was able to keep track of the situation.

Lang Xiaoyun and Dongfang Daying's movements were unable to be hidden from Shang Bo's all-seeing eye.

Since Ji Wenlong and Shang Bo weren't willing to fight the rank five undead corpse head-on yet, they could only bring the experts in the core region away.

Shang Bo placed some inner qi into the coral command, causing the space in the four special regions to shift. Several dozen low leveled cultivators were sent into the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World to meet with Sun Haiwei. Liu Zhuyuan and Ji Wenlong returned to the Bluestone Hidden Space which was the name of the separate space containing the bronze doors.

Not too long after Liu Zhuyuan left, Dongfang Daying and Lang Xiaoyun arrived. They brought the three undead corpses with them, and they flattened the core region directly only to discover that everyone had escaped.

"They're doing this on purpose!" Shang Lubing growled as they observed the situation from inside the Bluestone Hidden Space. "The Dual Season Land and the Unstable Region is basically a bunch of ruins now! They destroyed the Willow Forest as much as they could, and the only recognizable region is the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World!"

Shang Ke's face turned pale and it was clear he wasn't fully recovered after fighting with Ran Biluo. "Lang Xiaoyun and Dongfang Daying definitely know about our plan. Since they're unable to drag us out, they decided to destroy everything they could."

Shang Bo chuckled in amusement and his gaze returned to the Coral Command. "Hah. The Coral Command is powerful indeed. This was our objective anyway. We managed to obtain what we came here for, and everything else is a bonus. Even if they destroy the entire region, it's fine."

His words allowed everyone to heave a sigh of relief.

Ji Wenlong laughed at the side, "Well, we at least managed to retain a huge part of the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World. Ran Biluo didn't do that much damage to it. All four spiritual lands of the Zhu Family were used to cultivate extermination origins. Retaining a single one is still a win!"

Shang Lubing and Shang Ke nodded silently.

Shang Ke managed to experience first hand the benefits of the four special regions. After all, he only broke through because of the extermination origin gathered in the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World.

The Illusory Extermination Origin gathered by the Fantasy Spiritual Pearl was extremely compatible with the Shang Clan's martial arts. In the future, if any member of the Shang Clan wanted to break through, they would definitely know where to obtain an extermination origin that suited them.

"What should we do about the rank five undead corpse?" Shang Ke asked.

After thinking for some time, Shang Bo muttered, "Lang Xiaoyun and Dongfang Daying will definitely die if this keeps up. The two of them might not be able to injure the rank five undead corpse even if they tried. Looks like we should give them a ray of hope..."

"Are you thinking of sending the Martial Extermination Realm experts of the Rose Party and the Four Spiritual Peak over to assist them?" Ji Wenlong asked.

"... That might not be a good idea... We'll only be able to sneak attack them if they're spread out. If they all gather together and launch an all-out offensive, even the rank five undead corpse might not be able to hold on. It will be extremely difficult to deal with all of them then." Shang Lubing analyzed.

Shang Bo muttered softly, "Well, they're part of two different factions anyway. Let's just deal with them one at a time." After speaking, he pointed casually into the air. Two separate screens formed. "Ran Biluo had already met up with Yan Su'er. On the other side, Yuwen Shengjie and a newly ascended Martial Extermination Realm expert of the Rose Party met up. They clearly received news of the rank five undead corpse."

"Which side should we deal with first?" Shang Ke frowned.

To the Tongyou Institution, both factions had to be destroyed.

Shang Lubing thought for a second and muttered, "Let's deal with the two from the Four Spiritual Peak. Yan Su'er is a step away from reaching the fourth layer of the Martial Extermination Realm and Ran Biluo is stronger than the newly ascended Martial Extermination Realm expert from the Rose Party!"

Ji Wenlong and Shang Ke nodded in unison.

However, Shang Bo had another idea. "No. Let's deal with those from the Rose Party."

Before anyone else could ask him the reason behind his decision, he pointed at one of the screens and sighed, "Those virtueless bastards from the Rose Party are already gathering up their members. They don't plan to save Dongfang Daying at all! They wish to escape from the Coral Forest as soon as possible!"

"What are we waiting for then?!" Shang Ke widened his eyes in shock and cried.

Ji Wenlong immediately changed his tune when he realized what they were trying to do. "They won't be able to leave the battlefield between the two worlds without a proper command from the institution. If they leave the Coral Forest now, they will definitely run over to the Four Spiritual Peak to seek shelter. When our world was invaded previously, the Rose Party definitely had something to do with it. We cannot allow them to run over to the Four Spiritual Peak this time. They might be plotting something even worse..."

"Alright! We can't waste any more time!" Shang Lubing rose to his feet and stared at Liu Zhiyuan. "Kid of the Liu Family, let's go!"

A trace of worry filled Liu Zhiyuan's face when he looked at the various seniors around him. "Seniors, where... Where is my father?"

Shang Bo and Ji Wenlong looked at each other. Eventually, Shang Bo coughed lightly before pointing at the void. Two corpses fell to the ground and Liu Zhiyuan's body froze.

Ji Wenlong sighed, but considering his relationship with Liu Jitang, he had to be the one to explain. "Brother Jitang and Murong Tianlan released Zhu Tong, who had turned into a rank five undead corpse. They tried to stop him from escaping by sealing those bronze gates, but they exhausted their life force eventually. Zhu Tong killed them when he escaped. Zhiyuan, you're the only Martial Extermination Realm expert of the Liu Clan left. You have to pull yourself together!"

Shang Lubing added, "Brother Liu, you need to compose yourself."

Liu Zhiyuan's body trembled slightly, but his expression remained indifferent. No one could tell what he was thinking.

Ji Wenlong didn't know if Liu Zhiyuan understood the meaning behind his words, but there was no time to waste. They couldn't jeopardize the mission and he turned to speak to Shang Bo, "He should stay here. The three of us should be enough to stop Yuwen Shengjie and the other one. Please take care of him!"

"Of course." Shang Bo smiled and he pointed at the Coral Command. A spatial door opened up and Ji Wenlong, Shang Ke, and Shang Lubing disappeared through it.

All of a sudden, Liu Zhiyuan raised his head to ask Shang Bo, “Fourth uncle, where is my father’s spatial pouch?”

Chapter 177: Fourth Layer of the Martial Extermination Realm

“Fourth uncle, where is my father’s spatial pouch?” Liu Zhiyuan stared directly at Shang Bo.

Raising an eyebrow, he chuckled in amusement. “How do you know that I’m the one holding his spatial pouch?”

Liu Zhiyuan didn’t say a word as his gaze remained on Shang Bo.

Glancing at the stone chamber behind the bronze gate, Shang Bo’s gaze eventually returned to Liu Zhiyuan. “Your timing is really impeccable. The moment the other three left, you decided to ask me for the pouch. Looks like your father made enough preparations and allowed you to detect his spatial pouch...”

After he spoke, Shang Bo retrieved a tiny pouch from his sleeves.

A flash of light crossed Liu Zhiyuan’s eyes as he stepped forward subconsciously.

Shang Bo didn’t really bother with his reaction and he waved the pouch slightly in his hands. “Do you know how to open it?”

Liu Zhiyuan didn’t reply directly. Instead, he asked another question of his own. “Fourth uncle, will you return it to me? It’s something that belongs to my Liu Clan.”

The smile on Shang Bo’s face didn’t fade. “Are you sure the items contained within are from your Liu Family?”

“Naturally! Everything has been collected by my father through painstaking efforts. He even paid with his life! Uncle Shang, do you think that my Liu Clan doesn’t deserve what he obtained after exchanging his life for it?”

Shang Bo chuckled softly and tossed the pouch over.

Liu Zhiyuan didn’t hesitate to receive it. He wanted to open it immediately to see if anyone touched the items within.

At that time, Shang Bo’s sigh reached Liu Zhiyuan’s ears. “Kid, you need to think this through. If I keep the pouch, the institution will be the one to bear the pressure the moment it’s open. If you insist on keeping it, your Liu Clan will have to take it on your own...” Shang Bo’s tone changed all of a sudden. “Naturally, since you’re a Martial Extermination Realm expert, you will have some capabilities to hold up against what comes next.”

Looking at Liu Zhiyuan who had sunk into contemplation, the smile on Shang Bo’s face disappeared. He sighed softly, “You can only blame your father for being too greedy.”

Liu Zhiyuan’s expression changed, but he maintained his tight grip on the spatial pouch. “I hope Shang... I hope fourth uncle can enlighten me!”

The smile returned to Shang Bo’s face and he shook his head slightly. “You’re a smart kid. You definitely understand what I meant. All of us can remain silent and let you bring the spatial pouch

away with your identity as someone from the Liu Clan. Our four great clans will also hold a proper funeral for second brother. As someone from the older generation, I can only give you some advice. Since Liu Jitang had fallen, you're going to take on the role as the Liu Clan's patriarch!"

He paused for a second before continuing, "Naturally, Chief Ji thinks the same way!"

Seeing how Liu Zhiyuan was calming down, he added, "Of course, Third Sister Yun will also support that notion."

Liu Zhiyuan looked at the spatial pouch in his hand and eventually decided to hand it back to Shang Bo. "Many thanks for fourth uncle's advice. Everyone should see what is inside my father's spatial pouch after we return to the institution."

Shang Bo nodded and kept the pouch. "Relax. Everything that belongs to the Liu Clan will not be taken away. That was what Chief Ji and I planned to do anyway."

Liu Zhiyuan cupped his fists and bowed. "I understand! Fourth uncle, please open the spatial door! No matter what, I managed to advance into the Martial Extermination Realm. I should do my part for the institution too!"

Shang Bo nodded in satisfaction. "It's great that you think this way. However, you don't have to join in the battle this time. Instead, you should go and mess with Yan Su'er and Ran Biluo."

Liu Zhiyuan's expression froze. "I... I just stepped into the Martial Extermination Realm! How am I their opponent?"

Shang Bo wasn't shocked by his reaction at all. Instead, he tapped lightly on the Coral Command. Trembling slightly, the Coral Command emitted several rays of light.

Shang Bo closed his palm and the tiny mountain disappeared.

He completed his refinement on the Coral Command, and he managed to unlock all of its abilities. As such, he could move the Coral Command as he pleased, and his control over the Coral Forest wouldn't be affected in the slightest. He could bring it everywhere he went!

That was the goal of the institution to begin with! They wanted to remove the Coral Command from the Coral Forest entirely!

However, the Coral Command wasn't what Liu Zhiyuan was paying attention to. Instead, it was the extermination origin that came from it.

The fourth color that was flickering when Shang Bo first started to refine the Coral Command had started to solidify, and Liu Zhiyuan knew what it entailed!

"Fourth uncle, did you manage to enter the fourth layer of the Martial Extermination Realm?!" Liu Zhiyuan didn't notice it, but his voice was quivering slightly.

Shang Bo nodded in satisfaction. "That's right. I managed to strengthen my last extermination origin when I refined the Coral Command. I finally managed to cross the last barrier!"

Liu Zhiyuan gulped unconsciously. Actually, he wasn't really focused on the fact that Shang Bo had already reached the fourth layer. Instead, he wanted to know how Shang Bo advanced so quickly.

One had to know that the last time Liu Zhiyuan saw him, Shang Bo was only a second layer Martial Extermination Realm expert!

Out of all the Martial Extermination Realm experts of the four great clans, Shang Bo was the last to step into the level! His cultivation was the lowest, and that was why he was ranked the fourth among them.

All of a sudden, the weakest of the four patriarchs reached the fourth layer!

One had to know that the strongest of the four, Ji Wenlong, was also at that level! In a single step, Shang Bo's cultivation reached the same level as him!

Moreover, Shang Ke also managed to enter the Martial Extermination Realm in the Coral Forest.

That would mean that the Shang Clan possessed two Martial Extermination Realm experts!

Liu Zhiyuan finally realized that the situation in the Tongyou Institution was about to shift!

Initially, his Liu Clan was the one who was supposed to possess two Martial Extermination Realm experts! Now that Liu Jitang had died, he was the only one left! Moreover, his cultivation was the lowest among them! He was barely comparable to Shang Ke who also stepped into the Martial Extermination Realm!

Forcing a smile, Liu Zhuyuan muttered, "I'll have to congratulate fourth uncle for the advancement... Your Shang Clan actually managed to birth two Martial Extermination Realm experts. It's amazing!"

"After we settle everything in the Coral Forest, this old man is going to pass on my position in the Shang Clan. I'll focus my attention on the institution once I'm done." After he spoke, the spatial door opened. "Go on, I'll be right behind you!"

Chapter 178: Change of Plans

Two Martial Extermination Realm experts in the same clan!

That was what Liu Jitang was scheming to achieve. He wanted to replace the Ji Clan as the number one clan in the Tongyou City. Taking the chance, he would wipe out the evil remnants and leave his name in history!

Too bad for him, anything that could go wrong, would go wrong... His son managed to step into the Martial Extermination Realm, but he died in the hands of the rank five undead corpse.

Luckily he made arrangements for Liu Zhiyuan to refine a strand of extermination origin and enter the Martial Extermination Realm. With Ji Wenlong and Shang Bo's assistance, the Liu Clan would at least be able to keep their status as one of the four great clans!

"Grandpa, are you really planning on giving up your position as the head of the family?" The moment Liu Zhiyuan left, Shang Xia appeared.

A smile appeared on Shang Bo's face and his gaze swept across Chu Jia and Bai Luming who were maintaining the formation. "That's right. Actually, your fifth grandpa and your aunt have been taking care of the family for the past few years. My position as the patriarch doesn't really matter anymore."

“Is that it? Is there no other reason?” Shang Xia pressed.

“All these years, the support of the institution and Patriarch Kou allowed our Shang Clan to rise up in the Tongyou City. It’s time for me to make my contributions too. Moreover, I’m considered to be one of the creators of the institution. It’s good for the institution to grow stronger. Your fifth grandpa entered the Martial Extermination Realm, and he’s qualified to lead the family.” Shang Bo explained.

His explanation had been more than clear. Since he didn’t stop Chu Jia or Bai Luming from listening in, Shang Xia pretty much could confirm Shang Bo’s intentions.

Also, Ma Mingfeng had already arrived in the Bluestone Hidden Space. He followed Ji Wenlong back when they cleared out the Willow Forest, and he went to group up with Chu Jia to look through the formation.

Shang Bo not blocking them from hearing his explanation to Shang Xia was also part of his plan. He wanted them to help spread the news around.

Turning to stare directly at Chu Jia and Ma Mingfeng, Shang Bo chuckled, “Well, the three of you are more than enough to keep this place running. Now that I can bring the Coral Command around, I’ll start wandering around the place. Please let me know if anything comes up.”

Even though Chu Jia was the most talented of the three, talent couldn’t replace experience and Ma Mingfeng was appointed as their leader.

Hearing what Shang Bo said, Ma Mingfeng smiled in response, “Deputy Patriarch can rest assured and go. The three of us will definitely look through every nook and cranny to uncover the workings behind the grand formation.

Seeing his grandfather nodding his head, Shang Xia knew that Shang Bo was about to leave. He quickly asked, “Grandpa, I wish to look for someone. Can you send me to where the lower leveled members of the Rose Party are most concentrated? He should be there.”

“What a coincidence. Do you know why I sent Liu Zhiyuan to stall Ran Biluo and Yan Su’er?” Shang Bo grinned.

Shang Xia heard their previous conversation and knew that Ji Wenlong’s primary targets were Yuwen Shengjie and Sima Zhanxing. They wanted Yan Su’er and Ran Biluo to assist Lang Xiaoyun and Dongfang Daying in fighting the rank five undead corpse, hopefully injuring themselves in the process. When that happened, the Tongyou Institution would swoop in and reap all the benefits.

However, Shang Bo clearly changed the plan when he sent Liu Zhiyuan after Ran Biluo and Yan Su’er.

Shang Bo laughed softly when he saw Shang Xia shaking his head. “We miscalculated. The members of the Rose Party had already agreed to work with the Four Spiritual Peak. They knew what was going on. Ran Biluo and Yan Su’er have no intentions of helping Lang Xiaoyun or Dongfang Daying! They plan to escape from the Coral Forest like Yuwen Shengjie and Sima Zhanxing!”

“What?!” Shang Xia gasped. “They gave up on Lang Xiaoyun and Dongfang Daying?! Why would they do that?!”

“At this point, Lang Xiaoyun and Dongfang Daying are as good as dead. Yuwen Shengjie planned to work with Yan Su’er to bring the members of the Rose Party out. The two of them came to an understanding pretty quickly... This old man truly admires the two of them...” Shang Bo sighed.

“Grandpa, your plan is to...”

“We’re not letting a single one of them leave!” Shang Bo interrupted Shang Xia. “This is the best chance we’ll get to weaken both the Rose Party and the Four Spiritual Peak! I’ll deal with Yan Su’er, and you can work together with the rest of the members in the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World to kill as many members of the Rose Party as possible. You can look for your target while you’re at it!”

...

Things were exactly as Shang Bo had described. After the rank five undead corpse started running around, Lang Xiaoyun and Dongfang Daying wasted no time in notifying the others. Without hesitation, Yan Su’er and Yuwen Shengjie chose to give up on any rescue attempt. They immediately gathered the members of the Rose Party to break out of the Coral Forest.

Naturally, the two of them made the decision after realizing that those from the Tongyou Institution had already gotten their hands on the Coral Command!

After some simple communication with each other, the two sides decided to work together. They started to gather towards the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World to find a way to break out of the place.

Since Lang Xiaoyun and Dongfang Daying were kicking up a storm in the Willow Forest, the other region controlled by the Tongyou Institution was the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World. As such, Yan Su’er and the rest decided to break out from there!

Moreover, the lower leveled cultivators of the Tongyou Institution were all gathered there. When the four Martial Extermination Realm experts of the Four Spiritual Peak and the Rose Party gathered there, they would be able to create a sort of pincer attack on the weaker disciples of the Tongyou Institution, forcing Shang Bo and Ji Wenlong to take a step back!

Their plans were intricate, but they didn’t take into account that Shang Bo would be able to stabilize his foundations and truly enter the fourth layer of the Martial Extermination Realm. His control over the Coral Forest became absolute!

That was also how he managed to discover their movements at the very last second.

Well, the problem with Martial Extermination Realm experts would be solved by Martial Extermination Realm experts. None of that was a problem for Shang Xia as he stepped through the spatial door created by Shang Bo to bring him to the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World.

Even though he hadn’t left the place for long, a sense of nostalgia filled his mind when he entered.

However, it didn't last for long as his state of mind was immediately destroyed by the sound of fighting nearby.

After completing his comprehension of the Yin Yang Sword Formation, Shang Xia was extremely confident even if he had to face experts at the Martial Intent Realm.

Since the Martial Extermination Realm experts were restraining each other, there was not much left for Shang Xia to be wary of.

Turning his attention to the battle, Shang Xia unleashed his movement art and moved towards the location.

Yang Zigong was one of the deacons of the Protection Division too, and his authority was second only to Tang Yuan. His strength was impressive and his reputation in the Protection Division was huge. Close to half the elite patrol squads were under his command.

If not for Ji Wenlong standing behind Tang Yuan, Yang Zigong would have long since taken over as the head of the Patrol Division.

That was also the reason behind the two of them never seeing eye to eye.

With Liu Jitang fanning the flames behind the scenes, Yang Zigong moved a huge part of the patrol squads away from the Tongyou Peak and brought them to the Coral Forest, leading to the war on the Tongyou Peak. He was partly responsible for everything that happened after, and the moment the Tongyou Institution gained control of the Coral Command, Yang Zigong was stuck in a dilemma. He heaved a sigh of relief, knowing that he was safe, but he also knew that he would be in deep shit the moment they returned to the institution. That was also the reason he chose to volunteer to hold the fort in the Mountain and Sea Fantasy Spiritual World with Peng Lanqing, hoping that it would lessen his crimes.

Chapter 179: Just In Time

Yang Zigong was holding two Martial Intent Realm experts of the Rose Party back alone at the moment.

Even though he was risking his life and giving it his all, he was at a clear disadvantage. Even though he had been trying to stall for time, he found it getting unbearable.

“This should be enough, right?! It should be time for me to retreat... If I still remain here to stall them, I'll be leaving my life behind!” Yang Zigong growled helplessly. Even so, he didn't dare to retreat by himself.

Peng Lanqing was giving it his all not too far away. As an instructor of the outer division, Peng Lanqing's cultivation had already reached the grand completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm. He was holding back four enemies at the Martial Intent Realm by himself!

Even though he was also being suppressed, his fighting spirit and vigor weren't weakening in the slightest. In fact, he was getting more and more aggressive!

At that instant, Yang Zigong realized why he had never been able to gain an upper hand against Tang Yuan.

Regardless of character, connections, or prestige, he was more than comparable to Tang Yuan!

Even when they compared their strength, they were almost on par! Of course, he didn't know that Tang Yuan had already broken through to the grand completion stage.

Previously, he felt that the only reason Tang Yuan managed to obtain his position was because of Ji Wenlong's support. Now, he finally realized the largest difference between them.

Like what happened with Peng Lanqing, Tang Yuan's personality wouldn't allow him to escape from a battle like that! The thought of retreating wouldn't even cross his mind! Even if they had to face death, they would give it their all and cause the greatest amount of damage to their enemy before they died!

The battlefield between the two worlds wasn't a place where weaklings could thrive. The patrol squads needed terrifying resolve in order to strike fear in the hearts of their enemies!

Yang Zigong would never possess the resolve to die in battle with his enemies! That was where he lost to Tang Yuan!

Even if their strengths were similar, in a battle to the death, Tang Yuan would win without a shred of doubt!

As the battle raged on, Yang Zigong and Peng Lanqing knew that they were merely stalling for time. Yang Zigong had already made his preparations to escape. He had never thought of leaving his life behind during the battle!

Since Peng Lanqing was still fighting, he would feel a little guilty if he were to escape on his own.

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I... I'll hold on for a little bit longer! Just a little more...

Hey, wait a second... Why is there a student of the institution running towards us?! What the hell?

Yang Zigong gasped in his heart. He might not have recognized the youngster who came over suddenly, but he could tell that the newcomer wasn't even in the Martial Intent Realm.

In his eyes, the kid was nothing more than a fool. The battlefield was filled with Martial Intent Realm experts, and a mere Martial Extremity Realm disciple dared to intrude on them. Wasn't he just asking for it?

"Hey, brat, are you tired of living? Hurry up and leave!" Yang Zigong yelled. Disciples of the Protection Division were all massive brutes. There was hardly anyone who could speak amicably, much less when they were in such a dangerous situation.

The youngster who just appeared stared at him as if he was scared silly by the frightening battle that was going on as he wandered into the battlefield. In an instant, the divine sense of the Martial Intent Realm experts descended on him and the kid was nearly pressed flat into the ground.

A small completion stage cultivator of the Martial Intent who was tangled up with Yang Zigong sneered in response and sent a palm flying towards the youngster's chest.

After sending out the attack, he no longer paid attention to the kid. In his eyes, the kid was as good as dead.

When he turned back to the battle with Yang Zigong, he saw a look of shock on his opponent's face.

“Hmph, petty tricks. Do you think I’m so stupid?” He sneered and he wanted to continue attacking Yang Zigong.

Before he could do anything, a yell came from one of his teammates. “Be careful! Behind you!”
Behind?!

The cultivator turned around instinctively and placed both hands before his chest. He circulated his inner qi to form a barrier around him.

“What the f...” He couldn’t even complete his sentence before he was swallowed by a sea of sword lights.

By the time the light faded, not even his bones were left.

There wasn’t a need to mention the companion of the Martial Intent Realm expert who was killed, but even Yang Zigong was shocked beyond words. The battle between him and his opponent paused in that second.

Even though the youngster completed his quick kill, he didn’t continue to assist Yang Zigong. Instead, he went towards Peng Lanqing without even saying a word.

Yang Zigong and his opponent stared at each other and saw the shock in each other’s eyes.

“That... That movement technique... It looks like the Shang Clan’s Irregular Steps!”
Yang Zigong eventually snapped back to reality as his spear stabbed towards his opponent.

Hah... Do you think I’ll be afraid of you now that we’re fighting one on one?

Shang Xia didn’t realize the damage he caused to their fragile little hearts, but he couldn’t be bothered anyway.

He could only think of saving Peng Lanqing from his predicament. He could tell that under the attack of three Martial Intent Realm experts, the instructor of the outer division was in deep trouble despite his cultivation at the large completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm.

Unlike Yang Zigong who Shang Xia hadn’t the faintest clue about, he recognized Peng Lanqing right away!

Naturally, his appearance shocked the instructor to the core!

Peng Lanqing gasped in his heart. If he wasn’t mistaken, before entering the battlefield between two worlds, Shang Xia barely managed to escape death after being struck by lightning. He also barely managed to comprehend his first martial intent in the Martial Realm.

If he wasn’t hallucinating just a second ago, Shang Xia had used his martial intent at the Martial Extremity Realm! He killed a Martial Intent Realm expert before anyone could react!

There was no mistake about it!

However, wouldn’t that mean that in two short months, Shang Xia’s cultivation jumped from the large completion stage of the Martial Realm to the grand completion stage of the Martial Extremity Realm?! How was that even possible?!

That wasn't all. After settling things on Yang Zigong's side, he didn't seem tired at all. He was even running straight towards Peng Lanqing!

The experts surrounding Peng Lanqing immediately broke their formation. Two of them lunged at Shang Xia from both directions, trapping him in the middle.

One of them was at the small completion stage of the Martial Intent Realm, and the other was at the large completion stage. The two of them joined hands when dealing with a mere disciple of the Tongyou Institution at the Martial Extremity Realm!

Chapter 180: Surprise!

As two of them went to intercept Shang Xia, none of their teammates found it off. After all, Shang Xia's attack when he just appeared was too terrifying!

Killing a Martial Intent Realm expert at the Martial Extremity Realm was terrifying enough! However, he did it in one strike!

Of course, everything they saw was on the surface. Shang Xia knew that his situation wasn't as good as they were thinking.

The experts of the Rose Party weren't some third-rate trash like Zhu Ying. Moreover, he was suppressed by too many divine senses when he first appeared.

If he wanted to attack, he needed to break through the suppression of those Martial Intent Realm experts. He had to use quite a bit of energy to do so.

The previous exchange allowed him to confirm his guess. His sword formation was able to counter the effects of their divine sense! Of course, he had to deploy it in order for it to work!

As long as he remained in the radius of his sword formation, he would be protected fully! In fact, he wouldn't even feel the slightest bit of pressure coming from their divine sense.

Naturally, doing that came at a massive cost. His inner qi consumption became a huge issue.

When he activated the Yin Yang Sword Formation, he was able to kill Martial Intent Realm experts with no problem. Since the time taken for him to unleash the strike was short, his consumption of inner qi shouldn't be something he couldn't withstand. However, resisting their divine sense was a whole other issue.

Even with his huge reserves, resisting two different divine senses from two experts drained him quite a bit!

Now that he was under attack by two Martial Intent Realm experts, he had to unleash his sword formation once again! Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to exert half of his fighting abilities with the suppression of their divine sense.

That was the true reason behind the terror of Martial Intent Realm cultivators! They could easily defeat lower leveled cultivators with their divine sense alone!

That was also why Shang Xia didn't bother playing tricks or dodging their pincer attack. Instead, he increased his speed and charged straight towards them.

He was afraid that if he had to sustain his sword formation for a longer time, he would die without them doing anything! The faster he ended the battle, the better!

“Kill him!” The two experts of the Rose Party yelled in unison and revealed a sinister smile.

They felt that their companion only died because he was caught off guard.

Well, they weren't wrong. At the very least, Shang Xia couldn't kill them as easily as he killed the other.

Anyway, Shang Xia's target wasn't to kill them with his sword formation. Without caring about the waste of resources, three rank three talismans flew out at the two of them.

Those were the treasures he picked out from Zhu Ying's corpse, and the divine sense that was supposed to be in them had long dissipated. They were merely ordinary rank three talismans now.

Even though the talismans weren't very effective in dealing with the Martial Intent Realm cultivators, they couldn't really ignore them either!

Choosing to defend themselves while still continuing their assault on Shang Xia, they released a burst of inner qi.

To the two of them, defending against those weak talismans wasn't hard. They barely had to waste any time. However, that was the opening Shang Xia was looking for. Rushing past them, he charged straight at the Martial Intent Realm expert who was fighting Peng Lanqing.

Shang Xia was clear that the two of them had already raised their guards against him. Even if his sword formation was strong, he wouldn't be able to kill both at once!

In that case, he chose to confuse them with a distraction!

With Peng Lanqing already holding the other two of them down, making a sneak attack would be enough to send those opponents to the depths of hell! No matter what, the members of the Rose Party would die.

Peng Lanqing was extremely deserving of his status as an instructor of the outer division. He might have exhausted a lot of energy, but he was still holding on strong. He was in no way weaker than Shang Ke before he entered the Martial Extermination Realm.

The only reason he hadn't defeated his enemies was because there were too damn many of them!

Now that two of them had left to intercept someone else, the last two had to bear an extraordinary amount of pressure. Peng Lanqing immediately gained the upper hand, but killing the enemy instantly was next to impossible.

Shang Xia's appearance changed that!

Rushing at Peng Lanqing's opponents, another sword appeared in Shang Xia's hand. A loud blast tore through the air as two streaks of reddish-gold lightning bolts tore through the air and struck both of Peng Lanqing's opponents.

Shang Xia's Chaos Essence Lightning Palm might be strong, but it wasn't enough to critically injure an expert of the Martial Intent Realm yet.

Despite that, his attack was extraordinarily fast! Before anyone could react, the two lightning bolts struck them! In a state of shock, the two of them fumbled.

That was what Shang Xia was aiming for too.

Peng Lanqing was an experienced cultivator. He wouldn't miss the chance Shang Xia created for him.

Unleashing all his energy at once, he attacked his opponents without hesitation. In fact, he seemed to want to drag his opponent to hell with him from the intensity of his offensive.

The situation changed once again. Peng Lanqing's opponents also released everything they had to defend themselves desperately. His sudden movements revealed a weakness that Shang Xia was all too happy to capitalize on.

With the Yin Yang Sword Formation doing its thing, a shrill ringing tore through the air. Shang Xia revealed his true plan. His targets were the ones held down by Peng Lanqing! Shang Xia's inner qi gushed out from his body. Ignoring his consumption, a sea of sword light swallowed one of them. As a grunt echoed in Shang Xia's ears, the cultivator who was focus fired by Shang Xia detonated his weapon.

Shang Xia's expression changed slightly. Even though his target managed to escape, he paid a heavy price. His right hand was chopped in half.

Thinking that he had already escaped, the cultivator wanted to heave a sigh of relief when a palm came crashing down on his head. He failed to react and he crumbled to the ground instantly. He was deader than dead...

A roar rang in the distance as Peng Lanqing's opponent spat out several mouthfuls of blood. It seemed as though Shang Xia's tactic was extremely successful as he allowed Peng Lanqing to obtain an upper hand against the last one!

All of a sudden, Peng Lanqing stared at Shang Xia and yelled, "Be careful!"

Instinctively, Shang Xia leaped forward and flew tens of feet away.

By the time he crawled to his feet, he saw two shadows behind him and waves of heaven and earth qi brushed against him. He nearly fell face-first into the ground again.

Looking back, he saw Peng Lanqing standing in his original spot. The two Martial Intent Realm cultivators who were left behind earlier finally reacted, and they wanted to chase Shang Xia down. However, Peng Lanqing was terrifyingly strong. Without their companions to assist them, they were no match for Peng Lanqing! One of them flew through the air while vomiting blood while the other grabbed his broken hand while retreating slowly.